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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES ON ITS FOURTH SESSION, HELD IN BONN FROM 11 TO 22 DECEMBER 2000

Addendum

PART TWO: ACTION TAKEN BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES AT ITS FOURTH SESSION

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Decision 1/COP.4

Procedures to review reports submitted at the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling its decision 6/COP.3 which, *inter alia*, established an ad hoc working group to review and analyse in-depth the reports submitted at its third and fourth sessions,

Having considered the report of the Executive Secretary related to the organization of work for the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group,

Recognizing the quality and the large number of reports submitted at its third and fourth sessions;

1. *Decides* that:

(a) All national reports submitted at its third and fourth sessions shall be reviewed individually by the Ad Hoc Working Group before the beginning of its fifth session;

(b) The Ad Hoc Working Group shall conclude the process of reviewing all remaining reports submitted at the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties, during the period between the fourth and fifth sessions, by convening an inter-sessional meeting of up to 15 working days;

(c) The Ad Hoc Working Group will organize its work according to its experience and in accordance with the provisions of this decision;

2. *Also decides* that:

(a) The Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group shall be composed of two co-chairpersons and three vice-chairpersons, one of whom shall act as Rapporteur;

(b) The Ad Hoc Working Group, without neglecting other issues contained in reports, shall review and analyse reports by adopting thematic approaches, as appropriate, based on, *inter alia*, the following topics:

(i) Identification of best practices and successes in implementing the Convention;

(ii) Identification of main difficulties, obstacles and challenges in implementing the Convention;

(iii) Level of participation of all actors, including financial and technical support from developed countries, in the implementation process;

(iv) Linkages and synergies with other conventions on the environment and development;

(v) Strategies established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies;

3. *Invites* the Committee on Science and Technology and the Global Mechanism to provide advice and information to be used for the review of the implementation of the Convention;

4. *Further decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall submit an interim report on its work to the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties and a comprehensive report on its conclusions and concrete recommendations on further steps on the implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the Convention to make all necessary arrangements for the above-mentioned Ad Hoc Working Group to fulfil its mandate.

4th plenary
14 December 2000

Decision 2/COP.4

Interim report of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the in depth review and analysis of reports submitted to the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties,

Having considered the interim report of work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the outcome of the nine sessions held from 15 to 21 December 2000, attached to the present decision,

1. *Takes note* with appreciation of the interim report of the Ad Hoc Working Group;

2. *Decides* to include the interim report as an annex to the report of the Conference of the Parties on its fourth session.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Annex

Interim report of the Co-Chairmen on the first session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the review of implementation of the UNCCD

Held during the Fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD, Bonn

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A. LEGISLATIVE MANDATE AND BACKGROUND

1. Legislative mandate

By its decision 6/COP.3, the Conference of the Parties decided to establish an ad hoc working group to review and analyse in depth, at the fourth session, reports submitted at its third session and reports that will be submitted at its fourth session in order to draw conclusions and propose concrete recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention. By the same decision, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD was requested to make all necessary arrangements for the above-mentioned ad hoc working group (AHWG) to fulfil its mandate and to meet at the fourth session.

Further to consultations with interest and regional groups and in order to facilitate the decision on the ad hoc working group, the Secretariat prepared document ICCD/COP(4)/3/Add.7 (A), outlining a proposal for the work plan of the ad hoc working group and its objectives. This document, was well received by the Parties.

Pursuant to decision 1/COP.4, the AHWG received its procedural guidelines. It is worth recalling here that one of the criteria for selecting national reports to be reviewed at COP4 was the date of ratification and the adoption and/or elaboration of a national action programme of the countries. Some subregional and regional reports were also considered. In this context, inputs from reports of developed country parties, United Nations organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, that supported project activities in the concerned affected country Parties, were expected to also enrich this review.

Due to the size of the report review exercise, the Parties agreed on an inter-sessional meeting of up to 15 working days of the AHWG before COP 5. This was seen to be a necessary arrangement for processing the backlog of reports through an equitable review of all country reports submitted to the secretariat at COP 3 and COP 4. The decision on procedures stipulated that the AHWG would review all national reports individually prior to COP 5 and analyze reports by adopting thematic approaches without neglecting other issues contained in the reports. The

ad hoc working group invited the CST and the Global Mechanism to provide advice and information to be used for the review of the implementation of the Convention.

2. Election of the Bureau

The following Bureau was elected:

Co-Chairmen: Mr. Mohamed Mahmoud El-Ghaouth (Mauritania) and Mr. Willem R. J. Van Cotthem (Belgium)

Vice Chairmen: Mr. Octavio Perez Pardo (Argentina), Mr. Mohammad Reza Jabbari (Iran), (Rapporteur) Mr. Ogtay Jafarov (Azerbaijan)

3. Preparation for the review of national reports

The Group had to review the reports of 10 African, 6 Asian and 4 Latin American countries, plus those of 2 countries from the regional Annex IV and one report from Eastern Europe. Regional and subregional activities for all annexes were to be discussed at the end of the review process for each regional annex, within the time frame available. In order to maintain the desired coherence of presentations for reasons of comparability, the secretariat had invited the listed countries and regional groups presenting their national reports to include the following points in their presentation:

(a) assessment of measures taken;

(b) analysis of the obstacles in implementing the Convention;

(c) update on progress made since the submission of the report and assessment of the current status;

(d) suggestion as how to solve identified problems and next course of action.

It was understood that this broad framework that was tentatively proposed would easily be enriched by the topics of priority interest contained in operative paragraph 2(b) of decision 1/COP.4. Comments by concerned international organizations, and, above all, comments from developed country partners were expected to bring added value to this exchange.

The Co-chairmen also were aware that, in the light of the late approval of this very process, it had not been possible, for those who presented their reports, to prepare for it as extensively as Parties might have wished. They consider the process to be in its initial learning phase, they intend to draw the lessons of experience gained and therefore they suggested that any constructive observation and criticism from all concerned Parties in the COP 4 segment of the AHWG review would help to fully meet Parties' expectations in the resumed phase of the exercise.

Hence, this interim report aims at extracting preliminary elements and observations from the COP 4 segment of the country report review in the understanding that full lessons and related recommendations will be presented in a final comprehensive report after the inter-sessional meeting.

B. ASPECTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS

1. Broad features of the proceedings

The national reports review provided a more specific complement to the brief review that took place in the COW on the overview and the synthetic aspects of the implementation of the Convention. The initial work of the AHWG was considered an iterative process aiming at maximizing the lessons from experience as distilled through the national reports.

The first session of the AHWG heard the following reports:

1. Cape Verde	12. Namibia	23. Bolivia
2. Senegal	13. United Republic of Tanzania	24. Argentina
3. Mali	14. Subregional - SADC	25. Chile
4. Burkina Faso	15. Subregional - IGAD	26. Cuba
5. Benin	16. Tajikistan	27. Regional Latin America and the Caribbean
6. Subregional - UMA	17. Uzbekistan	28. Portugal
7. Subregional - CILSS/CEDEAO	18. Turkmenistan	29. Italy
8. Tunisia	19. Mongolia	30. Regional Northern Mediterranean
9. Lesotho	20. Lao People's Democratic Republic	31. Republic of Moldova
10. Swaziland	21. China	
11. Regional Africa	22. Regional Asia	

The Co-chairmen are pleased with the high quality of presentations and the rich content of the exchanges. They commend affected country Parties for their thorough preparation and excellent delivery. Likewise, participants expressed their appreciation for the comprehensive extent of the reports' coverage, the substantive information content, the candid assessment of obstacles and constraints and the useful summary of lessons learnt.

Comments and exchanges following the presentations of the national reports aimed at seeking or providing complementary clarifications, offering advice or highlighting areas of common interest. Affected countries from the same region often focused on shared areas of concern. Developed country Parties emphasized relevant methodologies and approaches. On the whole, these exchanges did not draw well defined conclusions from the analysis of the reports and thus did not provide sufficient elements to chart the path forward for the implementation process. Hence, many participants called for more concrete and constructive feedback.

The Chairman of the CST noted the consistently weak reference made to the scientific and technical work of the CST in the national reports in fields such as benchmark and indicators, traditional knowledge or early warning systems. The CST

proposed to the COP a number of pertinent decisions to address these shortcomings and suggested, inter alia, the revision of the secretariat Help Guide. The CST and the Global Mechanism are invited to bring their contribution to the review of implementation at the resumed session of the AHWG in conformity with the COP's decision on its procedures. It is expected that the Global Mechanism would provide information, in particular on support it can provide to countries in the light of its mandate.

The Co-chairmen suggest that no focus should be put on physical data and welcome more emphasis on success stories. A synthesis of issues drawn from the substantive exchanges, including the identification of best practices and of common difficulties and challenges and regional aspects as appropriate, be contained in the final comprehensive report to allow readers to benefit from the accumulated experience of all Parties having submitted a report at COP 3 and COP 4.

2. Presentation of affected country Parties

Given the number of presentations, participants greatly appreciated the use of visual support instruments. National reports usually covered such matters as institutional development, legislative, policy and enabling frameworks, national coordination, participatory mechanisms and partnership networking, awareness raising and capacity building, funding issues and, many times, benchmarks and indicators. In doing so they also covered questions pertaining to inter ministerial cooperation, the field level consultative process and the mobilization of the civil society. They called for a better integration of longer term environmental measures into economic policies, instruments and practices.

The need for predictable financial support was consistently identified as a pressing constraint at a time when national coordination bodies in charge of the UNCCD plan to move from NAP-preparation to the operational phase of field activities. The role of the Global Mechanism in facilitating and securing funding was acknowledged.

3. Presentation of subregional and regional programmes

Subregional and regional institutions presented their respective programmes. They reported on institutional developments such as the establishment of ministerial consultations, integrated planning frameworks, Coordination Committees and Thematic Groups and the use of Internet exchange forums. It was highlighted that SRAPs have the potential to turn into a cost effective channel for providing support to the NAPs in the concerned subregions. Regional and subregional institutions assisted member states in the preparation of the COPs and some delegations stated that their useful role deserved enhanced support.

Emphasis was put on South-South cooperation, finding responses to challenges in areas of common interest, notably in relationship with the work of the Committee on Science and Technology. Transboundary pilot projects have been launched between neighboring countries in some subregions. Support was provided to member states for the preparation of NAPs. Technical difficulties relate notably to the harmonization of evaluation parameters, benchmarks and indicators. The transaction cost of coordination and networking was recalled.

C. TENTATIVE HIGHLIGHTS ON KEY THEMATIC TOPICS

(to be completed after the resumed session of the AHWG)

1. Identification of best practices and successes

At the institutional level some progress was registered in putting into place or reactivating the necessary normative framework to encourage decentralization for natural resources management under the UNCCD.

Progress was also achieved in improving the conditions for partnership, through the identification and coordination of complementary initiatives through sectoral or thematic planning instruments.

The decentralization process in many instances was supported by consultative mechanisms at regional and local levels that can serve the development process far and beyond the Convention. Communication strategies to this effect integrated traditional and recent technologies in support of participatory development.

Countries and NGOs reported positive results in the strengthening of capacities for key actors of the civil society to identify and address challenges linked to sustainable development. In this respect measures in support of participatory development could be better reflected in the Help Guide.

Affected developed country Parties reported success in their awareness-raising efforts and were impressed with a strong response from the population, municipalities and academic institutions which demonstrated a growing interest in UNCCD related issues.

It was noted that considerable progress was being made on critical issues such as improved natural resources governance, land tenure or the promotion of women's role in rural development.

The point was made, notably in the African context, that there was a wealth of successful experiences at micro-level in relevant areas such as efficient use of water, land reclamation, range management or protection of the vegetal cover. Initiatives under the UNCCD framework to gather resources to multiply and replicate these successful experiences at field level are strongly recommended.

2. Identification of main difficulties, obstacles and challenges

At the institutional level, the national coordination bodies are not always anchored at the required level of decision making to bring coherence to the interventions of the concerned ministries. Nor are they always well equipped to mainstream experience gained under the NAP exercise into other strategic frameworks such as poverty reduction strategies. The Co-chairs recognize the considerable challenge the countries face in coordinating a multiplicity of agreements and strategies for environment and development, which often complicates the task of national implementation authorities.

It was recognized that developed country Parties, as cooperation partners, are facing initial difficulties to internalize the Convention in their own aid delivery process and must adjust their own procedures for the delivery of programme resources in a manner deemed adequate to deliver their commitment as Party to this instrument.

Inappropriate policy frameworks at the macro level in areas such as, for instance, trade practices or agricultural subsidies can hamper progress into the fight against desertification. This points out in many cases to an insufficient integration of environmental and economic policies.

The mobilization of financial resources from member countries and international partners remain a core challenge, notably as the process moves from the phase of NAP preparation to the phase of NAP implementation. In that context, a lack of response to push forward the forthcoming phase could demobilize key stakeholders. It must be noted that the challenge for establishing mechanisms for partnership arrangements is also acute at the subregional and regional level. Several interventions thus called for GEF support for UNCCD enabling activities. Coordination of external financial flows was also perceived as a difficult challenge. Affected developing countries were invited to bring forward priority projects or programmes from the NAPs in their regular discussions with developed country Parties.

Beyond anthropogenic factors, climate change with its context of worsening drought and unreliable rainfall patterns is perceived as a growing threat.

3. Level of participation of all actors, including financial and technical support from developed countries

3.1 Manifestation of political will through the national decision making and the budget allocation process

(to be elaborated after the resumed session of the AHWG)

3.2 Participatory development process involving the civil society, NGOs and CBOs

(to be elaborated after the resumed session of the AHWG)

3.3 Establishment of consultative mechanisms for the conclusion of partnership agreements

(to be elaborated after the resumed session of the AHWG)

4. Linkages and synergies with other conventions on the environment and development

Linkages and synergies with other Multilateral Environment Agreements and/or strategic frameworks on environment and development were encouraged. Synergistic programmes should benefit, at field level, from efforts under the UNCCD to promote capacity building initiatives such as participatory farming systems and farmer friendly networking structures that take into account biodiversity protection, carbon sequestration and other topics of interest in the combat of desertification.

Some studies are under way, at national level, to assess implications of and potential for synergistic measures between the UNCCD, UNFCC and CBD. It was observed that the upcoming initiatives under the international Forest Forum should

also be integrated. Support through the Joint Programme CBD/UNCCD could assist affected countries in their assessment efforts.

5. Strategies established within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies

For the UNCCD issues to be fully represented in the process of the coordination of policies and strategic frameworks for sustainable development, it is necessary that the expression of national political will, domestic investments and the commitment of international partners be expressed through concrete mechanisms at national level.

It was agreed that a critical level of NAP development should be achieved for successful linkages with other policies or strategies, notably those aiming at poverty reduction because the consideration of such relationships remains theoretical as long as the NAP implementation has not effectively started.

The constitution of national think tanks, steering groups and /or the production of studies on synergistic programmes development should be encouraged.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CO-CHAIRMEN ON THE BASIS OF THE COP 4 SESSION OF THE AHWG

1. Recommendations for the resumed session of the AHWG

1.1 Affected country Parties presenting their reports during the inter-session of the AHWG are invited to take fully into account the procedures to review reports submitted at the third and fourth sessions of the COP contained in decision 1/COP.4, notably its operative paragraph 2. In the light of the important number of reports to be submitted during the resumed session of the AHWG, the affected country Parties are, to the extent possible, invited to make use of multi-media equipment.

1.2 Developed country Parties participating in the review of these reports are invited to provide specific feedback on the conclusions they reach and the steps they intend to take in the light of the submission of reports from affected country Parties.

1.3 As demonstrated at the COP 4 session of the AHWG, developed country Parties should continue to use the learning opportunity offered by the review process to further educate their ongoing bilateral and multilateral aid efforts to assist developing country Parties. Developed country Parties are encouraged to actively incorporate their response to the reports into their consideration of future assistance measures.

1.4 Relevant international organizations are requested to contribute more actively to the review process through a presentation of measures they are taking in response to the issues and concerns expressed in the national reports.

1.5 Presentations and exchanges during the resumed session should facilitate forward looking conclusions on the substance of the matters under review and the next steps to be taken in order to foster the implementation process.

1.6 If time permits, presentations from countries of a given region could be concluded by an informal wrap up of main lessons learnt and priority themes to be addressed. There would thus be opportunities for such exchanges for each of the regional implementation annexes.

1.7 Likewise it is suggested to accommodate, to the extent possible, a review of the reports of developed country Parties and relevant international organizations.

2. With regard to the NAP preparation process, the Co-chairmen also would like to launch an appeal to the countries in position to do so, to complete and adopt their NAP instruments so as to be in a position to report on new developments at the inter-session of the AHWG. They also invite partner countries and international organizations to provide early support to these effort.

3. The resumed session should take place at a location that facilitates maximum participation.

The Co-Chairmen:

Mr. Mohamed Mahmoud El-Ghaouth :

Mr. Willem R. J. Van Cotthem :

Bonn, 21 December 2000

Decision 3/COP.4

Procedures for the review of the implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 22, paragraph 2(a), (b) and (c), as well as articles 24 and 26 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Recalling its decisions 10/COP.1, 10/COP.2 and 6/COP.3 on the review of the implementation of the Convention,

Recalling also its decision 1/COP.4, which established a procedure to review reports submitted at the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties, including those submitted through an inter-sessional meeting,

Having considered reports of the Executive Secretary on the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Reaffirms* the objectives and provisions of the UNCCD, in particular article 22 on the Conference of the Parties;

2. *Decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group (AHWG) should fulfil its mandate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of decision 6/COP.3, and should draw up conclusions and propose concrete recommendations for further steps in the implementation of the Convention;

3. *Decides also* that the Ad Hoc Working Group to review and analyze in depth the reports submitted at its third and fourth sessions should fulfil its mandate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of decision 1/COP.4, and should draw up conclusions and propose concrete recommendations for further steps in the implementation of the Convention;

4. *Decides also* that further proposals and suggestions of Parties and other interested institutions, having taken into account the experience and comprehensive report of the AHWG, on concrete recommendations for the review of implementation of the Convention, including proposals on procedures and modalities for the establishment of a committee to review the implementation of the Convention (CRIC), be submitted through the secretariat for consideration at the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the Convention to circulate the comprehensive report of the Ad Hoc Working Group and those proposals at least eight weeks prior to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties;

6. *Invites* the Committee on Science and Technology and the Global Mechanism to provide information to be used for the review of the implementation of the Convention.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Decision 4/COP.4

Programme and budget for the biennium 2000-2001

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling its decisions 6/COP.2 and 3/COP.3,

Recalling also decision 2/COP.1 and its annex containing the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the secretariat to present the reports,

Taking note of the reports on programme and budget presented by the Executive Secretary to the Conference of Parties at its fourth session in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add. 1 to 8,

A. The core budget

1. *Approves* the increase to the core budget of the Convention for the biennium 2000-2001 by US$335,300 for the logistical costs of the inter-sessional meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group; this will not constitute a precedent for the future;

2. *Reminds* all Parties that the contributions to the core budget are expected on or before 1 January of each year in accordance with paragraph 14 of the financial rules of the Convention, and that they should pay promptly and in full their contributions for the year 2001;

3. *Calls upon* Parties that have not yet done so to pay as soon as possible and in full the contributions required for the core budget of the Convention for 1999 and 2000;

4. *Notes* the work being done to establish common administrative services in Bonn with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and *requests* the Executive Secretary to report to its fifth session any outcome taking into account the unique features of the convention, as well as the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties;

5. *Also notes* the report on the performance of the Convention's trust funds for 1999, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.3, and the report on the performance of the Convention's trust funds for 2000 as of 30 June 2000, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.6;

6. *Invites* the Executive Secretary to report to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties on the performance of all the Convention's trust funds in 2000 and 2001 in accordance with the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to continue consultations with the relevant departments of the United Nations in order to secure more resources from the overhead to fund the Convention's activities, including those related to liaison arrangements with the United Nations Headquarters;

8. *Welcomes* the audited financial statements for the Convention's trust funds in 1999, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.5 (A) and (B);

9. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit to the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session a Programme Budget for the biennium 2002-2003;

10. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary, in the proposed Programme Budget for the biennium 2002-2003, to include detailed tables of the proposed expenditures and resource requirements for each subsidiary body under the budget line for substantive support to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies;

11. *Further requests* the secretariat to inform at the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties on activities to be funded out of the core budget, and where appropriate, out of the Supplementary Fund, and in consistency with the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties;

12. *Reconfirms* its authorization to the Executive Secretary, as contained in decision 3/COP.3, to make transfers between each of the main appropriation lines 1 to 6 of the approved budget of the biennium 2000-2001, up to an aggregate limit of 15 per cent of the total estimated expenditure for those appropriation lines, provided that a further limitation of up to minus 25 per cent of each such appropriation line shall apply, particularly for the financing of the two meetings of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties and the meeting of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.6, paragraph 22.

B. The Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund

13. *Reiterates* its appreciation to the Government of Germany for its generous contribution of DM 1 million to the secretariat for Convention events organized by the secretariat;

14. *Takes note* of the funding estimates for the Supplementary Fund amounting to US$9,256,300 for 2001, and *invites* Parties, as well as Governments of States not Parties, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, to make contributions to this Fund, established under paragraph 9 of the financial rules for:

(a) Support to the participation of some representatives of non-governmental organizations from affected developing country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, in sessions of the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Facilitation of assistance to affected developing country Parties in accordance with article 23, paragraph 2(c), and article 26, paragraph 7, of the Convention;

(c) Other appropriate purposes consistent with the objectives of the Convention;

15. *Further takes note* of the funding estimates for the Special Fund amounting to US$1,914,400, and *invites* Parties, as well as Governments of States not Parties, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, to make contributions to this Fund, established under paragraph 10 of the financial rules, in order to support the participation of representatives of developing, and in particular least developed country Parties affected by desertification and/or drought, particularly those in Africa, in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, and in particular, the inter-sessional meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group following the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties; if the necessary funding for the inter-sessional meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group is not forthcoming, the Conference of the Parties *approves*, on an exceptional basis, the use of assessed financial contributions from States that become Parties to the Convention in 2000 and 2001;

16. *Notes* the estimated additional cost that will be incurred in the event that the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties is held in Bonn and *invites* the Executive Secretary to seek additional contributions to cover that cost as appropriate;

17. *Notes* that there has been insufficient time at its fourth session to consider the report ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.1 on regional coordination units; and in this context, *requests* the Executive Secretary to submit a new report providing a more detailed and thorough evaluation of the need for, feasibility of, modalities for and costs involved for the regional coordination units as well as an evaluation to address the approach to regional level activities within the United Nations system, taking into account the need to avoid duplication of the mandates of existing organizations, with a view to enabling the Conference of the Parties to take a decision at its fifth session;

18. *Notes with appreciation* the report on the performance of the Trust Fund for supplementary activities in 1999, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.4, and the report on the performance of the Trust Fund for supplementary activities in 2000, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.7;

19. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session on the status of the trust funds established under the Financial Rules.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Annex

Incremental costs of holding the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties in Bonn

(Thousands of US dollars)

Item of expenditure	2001
Incremental costs	942.2
Contingencies	29.0
Subtotal	**971.2**
Overhead charge	126.3
Working capital reserve	91.1
Total	**1,188.6**

Decision 5/COP.4

Programme of work for the Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 22 of the Convention,

Recalling also its decisions 9/COP.1, 2/COP.2 and 4/COP.3 on its programme of work, 10/COP.1 on review of the implementation of the Convention, 11/COP.1 on procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation and 9/COP.3 on the review of policies, operational modalities and activities of the Global Mechanism,

1. *Decides* to include the following selected items in the agenda of its fifth session and, if necessary, its sixth session:

(a) Adoption of the programme and budget for the biennium 2002-2003;

(b) Review of the implementation of the Convention and of its institutional arrangements, pursuant to article 22, paragraph 2(a) and (b), and article 26 of the Convention:

(i) Consideration of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the in-depth review and analysis of the reports submitted to the third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties;

(ii) Consideration of additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the Conference of the Parties in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention;

(c) Review, pursuant to article 22, paragraph 2(d) of the Convention, of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology, including its recommendations to the Conference of Parties and its programme of work, and the provision of guidance to it;

(d) Review, pursuant to article 22, of the report of the Global Mechanism on its activities, and the provision of guidance to it;

(e) Review of available information regarding the financing of Convention implementation by multilateral agencies and institutions, including information on the activities of the Global Environment Facility concerning desertification that relate to its four focal areas, as specified in article 20, paragraph 2(b) of the Convention;

(f) Review of activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies;

(g) Consideration of outstanding items:

(i) Consideration of procedures and institutional mechanisms for the resolution of questions of implementation, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention, with a view to deciding how to take this matter forward;

(ii) Consideration of annexes containing arbitration and conciliation procedures, in accordance with article 28, paragraphs 2(a) and 6, of the Convention;

(iii) Consideration of rule 47 of the rules of procedure;

(h) Open dialogue with non-governmental organizations;

2. *Decides also* to include the following selected item in the agenda of its sixth session:

(a) Review of the implementation of the Convention and of its institutional arrangements, pursuant to article 22, paragraph 2(a) and (b), and article 26 of the Convention:

(i) Review of reports on implementation of affected country Parties of all regions, including on the participatory process, and on experience gained and results achieved in the preparation and implementation of national action programmes;

(ii) Review of the report on progress made in the formulation and implementation of subregional and regional action programmes in all regions;

(iii) Review of reports by developed country Parties on measures taken to assist in the preparation and implementation of action programmes of affected country Parties of all regions, including information on financial resources they have provided, or are providing, under the Convention;

(iv) Review of information provided by relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on their activities in support of the preparation and implementation of action programmes under the Convention;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to circulate in all official languages at least three months prior to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties a provisional annotated agenda and appropriate documentation for that session, reflecting the decisions contained in paragraph 1 above.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Decision 6/COP.4

Global Mechanism

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling its decision 9/COP.1 on the Global Mechanism,

Recalling also that the second review of policies, operational modalities and activities of the Global Mechanism will take place at the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Takes note of the reports on policies, operational modalities and activities of the Global Mechanism as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/4 and Add.1, as well as of the report of the Facilitation Committee of the Global Mechanism as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/Add.2.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Decision 7/COP.4

Adoption of a regional implementation annex for Central and Eastern Europe

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling resolutions 52/198 of 18 December 1997 and 53/191 of 15 December 1998 of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention,

Recalling also decision 11/COP.2, in which the Conference urged observer countries of Central and Eastern Europe to take appropriate action to become parties to the Convention and invited them to produce a draft additional regional implementation annex to the Convention for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its third session,

Recalling also decision 7/COP.3, whereby the Conference of the Parties invited the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and all Parties to the Convention to continue, under the auspices of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, the process of consultations on the draft additional implementation annex with a view to adopting it at its fourth session,

Reaffirming article 7 of the Convention which states that, in implementing this Convention, the Parties shall give priority to affected African country Parties, in the light of the particular situation prevailing in that region, while not neglecting affected developing country Parties in other regions,

Recalling also resolution 54/223 of 22 December 1999, in which the General Assembly welcomed the progress made in producing a draft additional regional implementation annex to the Convention for countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and invited those countries to continue their efforts towards acceding to the Convention,

Welcoming the accession of countries of Central and Eastern Europe to the Convention as well as the draft additional regional implementation annex to the Convention for countries of Central and Eastern Europe, contained in the annex to ICCD/COP(3)/16,

Recalling articles 30 and 31 of the Convention, which state, *inter alia*, that any additional annex to the Convention and any amendment to an annex shall be proposed and adopted in accordance with the procedure for amendment of the Convention set forth in article 30, and that the text of any such proposed amendment shall be communicated to the Parties by the Permanent Secretariat at least 6 months before the meeting at which it is proposed for adoption.

Recalling that the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties at its meeting on 23 March 2000 recommended that the Conference of the Parties consider for adoption the proposed additional regional implementation annex at its fourth session,

1. *Decides* to adopt as annex V to the Convention the regional implementation annex for Central and Eastern Europe attached to the present decision;

2. *Acknowledges* that the implementation of the regional annex V to the Convention should not impact on the provision of financial resources for the implementation of the Convention, especially for the implementation of annexes of affected developing country Parties, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;

3. *Decides* that the regional annex V shall be forwarded forthwith to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and requests the Secretary-General, in accordance with articles 31, paragraph 1 and 39 of the Convention, to communicate the adoption of the annex to all Parties;

4. *Requests* the secretariat to make all necessary arrangements for the annex to be forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Annex

Annex V

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ANNEX FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Article 1
PURPOSE

The purpose of this Annex is to provide guidelines and arrangements for the effective implementation of the Convention in affected country Parties of the Central and Eastern European region, in the light of its particular conditions.

Article 2
PARTICULAR CONDITIONS OF THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REGION

The particular conditions of the Central and Eastern European region referred to in article 1, which apply in varying degrees to the affected country Parties of the region, include:

(a) specific problems and challenges related to the current process of economic transition, including macroeconomic and financial problems and the need for strengthening the social and political framework for economic and market reforms;

(b) the variety of forms of land degradation in the different ecosystems of the region, including the effects of drought and the risks of desertification in regions prone to soil erosion caused by water and wind;

(c) crisis conditions in agriculture due, *inter alia*, to depletion of arable land, problems related to inappropriate irrigation systems and gradual deterioration of soil and water conservation structures;

(d) unsustainable exploitation of water resources leading to serious environmental damage, including chemical pollution, salinisation and exhaustion of aquifers;

(e) forest coverage losses due to climatic factors, consequences of air pollution and frequent wildfires;

(f) the use of unsustainable development practices in affected areas as a result of complex interactions among physical, biological, political, social and economic factors;

(g) the risks of growing economic hardships and deteriorating social conditions in areas affected by land degradation, desertification and drought;

(h) the need to review research objectives and the policy and legislative framework for the sustainable management of natural resources; and

(i) the opening up of the region to wider international cooperation and the pursuit of broad objectives of sustainable development.

Article 3
ACTION PROGRAMMES

1. National action programmes shall be an integral part of the policy framework for sustainable development and address in an appropriate manner the various forms of land degradation, desertification and drought affecting the Parties of the region.

2. A consultative and participatory process, involving appropriate levels of government, local communities and non-governmental organizations, shall be undertaken to provide guidance on a strategy with flexible planning to allow maximum local participation, pursuant to article 10, paragraph 2(f), of the Convention. As appropriate, bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies may be involved in this process at the request of the affected country Party concerned.

Article 4
PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

In preparing and implementing national action programmes pursuant to articles 9 and 10 of the Convention, each affected country Party of the region shall, as appropriate:

(a) designate appropriate bodies responsible for the preparation, coordination and implementation of its programme;

(b) involve affected populations, including local communities, in the elaboration, coordination and implementation of the programme through a locally driven consultative process, with the cooperation of local authorities and relevant non-governmental organizations;

(c) survey the state of the environment in affected areas to assess the causes and consequences of desertification and to determine priority areas for action;

(d) evaluate, with the participation of affected populations, past and current programmes in order to design a strategy and elaborate actions in the action programme;

(e) prepare technical and financial programmes based on the information gained through the activities in subparagraphs (a) to (d); and

(f) develop and utilize procedures and benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the programme.

Article 5
SUBREGIONAL, REGIONAL AND JOINT ACTION PROGRAMMES

1. Affected country Parties of the region, in accordance with articles 11 and 12 of the Convention, may prepare and implement subregional and/or regional action programmes in order to complement and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of national action programmes. Two or more affected country Parties of the region may similarly agree to prepare a joint action programme between or among them.

2. Such programmes may be prepared and implemented in collaboration with other Parties or regions. The objective of such collaboration would be to secure an enabling international environment and to facilitate financial and/or technical support or other forms of assistance to address more effectively desertification and drought issues at different levels.

3. The provisions of articles 3 and 4 shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the preparation and implementation of subregional, regional and joint action programmes. In addition, such programmes may include the conduct of research and development activities concerning selected ecosystems in affected areas.

4. In preparing and implementing subregional, regional or joint action programmes, affected country Parties of the region shall, as appropriate:

(a) identify, in cooperation with national institutions, national objectives relating to desertification which can better be met by such programmes, and relevant activities, which could be effectively carried out through them;

(b) evaluate the operational capacities and activities of relevant regional, subregional and national institutions;

(c) assess existing programmes relating to desertification among Parties of the region and their relationship with national action programmes; and

(d) consider action for the coordination of subregional, regional and joint action programmes, including, as appropriate, the establishment of coordination committees composed of representatives of each affected country Party concerned to review progress in combating desertification, harmonize national action programmes, make recommendations at the various stages of preparation and implementation of the subregional, regional or joint action programmes, and act as focal points for the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation pursuant to articles 16 to 19 of the Convention.

Article 6
TECHNICAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION

In conformity with the objective and principles of the Convention, Parties of the region shall, individually or jointly:

(a) promote the strengthening of scientific and technical cooperation networks, of monitoring indicators and of information systems at all levels, as well as their integration, as appropriate, in worldwide systems of information; and

(b) promote the development, adaptation and transfer of relevant existing and new environmentally sound technologies within and outside the region.

Article 7
FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS

In conformity with the objective and principles of the Convention, affected country Parties of the region shall, individually or jointly:

(a) adopt measures to rationalize and strengthen mechanisms to supply funds through public and private investment with a view to achieving concrete results in action to combat land degradation and desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;

(b) identify international cooperation requirements in support of national efforts, thereby creating, in particular, an enabling environment for investments and encouraging active investment policies and an integrated approach to effectively combating desertification, including early identification of the problems caused by this process;

(c) seek the participation of bilateral and/or multilateral partners and financial cooperation institutions with a view to ensuring implementation of the Convention, including programme activities which take into account the specific needs of affected country Parties of the region; and

(d) assess the possible impact of article 2(a) on the implementation of articles 6, 13 and 20 and other related provisions of the Convention.

Article 8
INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

1. In order to give effect to this Annex, Parties of the region shall:

(a) establish and/or strengthen national focal points to coordinate action to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought; and

(b) consider mechanisms to strengthen regional cooperation, as appropriate.

2. The Permanent Secretariat may, at the request of Parties of the region and pursuant to article 23 of the Convention, facilitate the convocation of coordination meetings in the region by:

(a) providing advice on the organization of effective coordination arrangements, drawing on experience from other such arrangements; and

(b) providing other information that may be relevant in establishing or improving coordination processes.

Decision 8/COP.4

Declaration on the commitments to enhance the implementation of the obligations of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the provisions of the Convention related to its implementation and to the obligations of the Parties,

Recalling also decision 8/COP.3,

Having considered the report from the Executive Secretary as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/3/Add.9,

1. *Decides* to approve the text of the declaration attached to the present decision;

2. *Decides also* to include the declaration as an annex to the report of the Conference of the Parties on its fourth session.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Annex

Declaration on the commitments under the Convention to enhance implementation of the obligations of the UNCCD

WE, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Parties and observer States to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, participating in the fourth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties held at Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany, from 11 to 22 December 2000, as a follow up to "The Recife Initiative: Towards Enhancing the Implementation of the Convention"[1];

PURPOSE

ACKNOWLEDGE that Agenda 21, in particular Chapter 12 which relates to the "management of fragile systems: the combat against desertification and drought", highlights concepts, actions, goals and activities that remain valid;

REAFFIRM that human beings in affected or threatened areas are at the centre of the concern to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;

ACKNOWLEDGE that desertification and drought are problems of global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world, and that joint action by the international community is needed to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought;

REAFFIRM the provisions of the Convention and resolve to fulfil the commitments and to enhance the implementation of the obligations under the Convention and to actively continue to support its effective and full implementation;

REAFFIRM ALSO our political will and commitments to the implementation of the Convention in line with its provisions, including through the formulation and implementation of action programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought;

FURTHER REAFFIRM, in pursuing the objective of the Convention and in accordance with its provisions, that Parties shall adopt, *inter alia*, an integrated approach addressing the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of the processes of desertification and drought;

ENCOURAGE synergies between the Rio Conventions and related Multilateral Environmental Agreements as well as international organizations to strengthen their cooperation and seek partnerships, with due regard to their respective mandate, with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of these Conventions at all levels;

EXPRESS our satisfaction with the steps being taken by developing country Parties to elaborate and implement action programmes, and the efforts being made to promote the participation of all actors of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations, in the process of implementation of the Convention;

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[1] Decision 8/COP.3.

EXPRESS ALSO our appreciation for the measures taken by developed country Parties to assist in the elaboration and implementation of action programmes of developing country Parties;

FURTHER EXPRESS our appreciation for the valuable work undertaken by international, regional and subregional organizations, including multilateral financial institutions, and civil society including non-governmental as well as community-based organizations, in their efforts to implement the Convention at all levels;

OBJECTIVES

ACKNOWLEDGE the need to strengthen international cooperation, within the framework of the Convention, to enhance combating desertification and drought through the identification of ways and means to promote and facilitate access to appropriate technology by affected country Parties, and to provide substantial financial resources, particularly to affected developing country Parties;

RECOGNIZE the need to ensure that effective action is taken on initiatives derived from the Convention, in combating poverty with a view to achieving sustainable development in affected areas;

RECOGNIZE ALSO the need to implement action programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought as important instruments, *inter alia*, for long-term protection of ecosystems in affected countries;

EMPHASIZE the necessity to develop and/or strengthen genuine partnership and cooperation by enhancing efforts in collaboration with all relevant actors, including those from civil society, at all levels, through appropriate action so as to further enhance implementation of the obligations of the Convention with a view to improve the living conditions of women and men and achieve sustainable development in affected countries;

TIME FRAME

STRESS the need to enhance special efforts to combat and prevent desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought during the first decade (2001-2010) of the 21st century, in order to address the severe situation prevailing in various affected developing country Parties, particularly in Africa;

SPECIFIC THEMATIC AND SECTORAL AREAS

DECLARE that during this decade the strategic areas for action at all levels, in accordance with national plans and priorities and in conformity with the provisions of the Convention, should include the following:

- sustainable land use management, including water, soil and vegetation in affected areas;
- sustainable use and management of rangelands;
- development of sustainable agricultural and ranching production systems;
- development of new and renewable energy sources;
- launching of reforestation/afforestation programmes and intensification of soil conservation programmes;

- development of early warning systems for food security and drought forecasting;
- desertification monitoring and assessment.

DECLARE ALSO our intention to concentrate our efforts on areas identified at the national level, including: the promotion of traditional knowledge; the promotion of appropriate environmental education; and the enhancement of cooperation with institutions and organizations dealing with development policies and programmes to eradicate illiteracy and the development of capacity-building in affected areas;

CONCRETE MEASURES AND MEANS FOR ENHANCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

REAFFIRM our obligations, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, to undertake, *inter alia*, the following actions:

- provide substantial financial resources and other forms of support to assist affected developing country Parties, particularly those in Africa, effectively to develop and implement their own long-term plans and strategies to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;
- promote the mobilization of new and additional funding[2];
- encourage the mobilization of funding from the private sector and other non-governmental sources; and,
- promote and facilitate access by affected country Parties, particularly in affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how;

EXPRESS concern that, despite important efforts made by all interested partners, adequate financial and other resources have not been mobilized, which has constrained the ability of affected developing country Parties to fulfil their commitments under the Convention;

URGE all relevant actors to take a set of proactive financial measures;

DEVELOP and carry out activities to promote the mainstreaming of the implementation of national action programmes, within relevant national strategies for sustainable development, including strategies for poverty eradication;

INVITE affected developing countries, that have not yet adopted their national action programmes, and, where appropriate, regional and subregional action programmes, to accelerate the process of elaboration and adoption of their action programmes with a view to finalizing them no later than the end of 2005;

INVITE ALSO other affected country Parties that notify, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, the Permanent Secretariat of their intention to prepare a national action programme, to accelerate the process with a view to finalizing such programme no later than the end of 2005;

CALL UPON the international community, in particular the developed country Parties and the United Nations system, and invite multilateral financial institutions, the private sector and all other interested actors, to support the efforts of affected

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[2] Pursuant to article 20, 2(b) of the Convention.

developing country Parties in the process of elaborating and implementing action programmes to combat desertification including, as appropriate, interregional programmes and platforms of cooperation, by providing them with financial resources and other forms of assistance;

ENCOURAGE enhanced cooperation between the Rio Conventions and other relevant agreements as well as international, regional or subregional forums, within their respective mandates, with a view to promoting the Convention's objective of combating desertification and/or mitigating the effects of drought;

INVITE Parties to take action to improve and facilitate further access by affected developing country Parties to Global Environment Facility (GEF) resources for the implementation of the Convention;

WELCOME the decision of the GEF council which "requests the Chief Executive Officer to explore the best options for enhancing the support of the GEF in assisting affected countries, especially those in Africa, to implement the United Nations Convention to combat desertification taking into account the third replenishment";

CALL FOR the strengthening of the Global Mechanism in order to enable it to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms and to promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources, including for the transfer of technology, on a grant basis, and/or on concessional or other terms, to affected developing country Parties;

URGE all relevant actors to facilitate access to small and medium sized credit lines, and to promote and encourage partnership agreements and/or arrangements with the private sector, in order to increase investments and to foster activities related to the implementation of the Convention at the local and national levels;

MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP

RECOGNIZE that methodologies on desertification assessment and monitoring need to be better implemented so as to enable the affected countries concerned to meet the objectives of the Convention;

RESOLVE that the provisions of this Declaration should be given due consideration in the framework of the regular review of the implementation of the Convention and, in this regard, invite Parties to include in their reports, submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, appropriate information related to the enhanced implementation of the obligations of the Convention, as a follow-up to this Declaration, and request the Executive Secretary of the Convention to compile, synthesize and submit such information through a report to each COP during this decade, starting in 2003;

URGE all Parties, relevant international organizations, regional and non-governmental organizations, foundations and the private sector to continue supporting action to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, and to bring into concrete actions the provisions of this Declaration.

Bonn, 22 December 2000

Decision 9/COP.4

Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Welcomes* the ongoing collaboration between the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the UNCCD and the involvement of the Global Mechanism in this collaboration, which resulted in the identification and funding of activities against land degradation by the GEF;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the decision of the GEF Council at its last meeting, from 1 to 3 November 2000, which requested the Chief Executive Officer to explore the best options for enhancing the support of the GEF in assisting affected countries, especially those in Africa, to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, taking into account the third replenishment;

3. *Invites* all Parties to the Convention to support the GEF, including as appropriate through its Council and the pursuit of negotiations in the Assembly of the GEF so as to explore the best options for enhancing the support of the GEF in assisting affected countries, especially those in Africa, to implement the Convention taking into account the third replenishment;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD to report to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties on the follow-up to the GEF Council decision, referred to in paragraph 2, above, in support of the implementation of the Convention and of developments in this regard.

12th plenary
22 December 2000

Decision 10/COP.4

Review and implementation of scientific and technological aspects of national reports

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 11/COP.1 and 6/COP.3 to establish an ad hoc working group to review and analyse, at its fourth session, national reports submitted by Parties, in order to draw conclusions and propose concrete recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention,

Taking note of the synthesis of scientific and technical information, particularly with regard to benchmarks and indicators used to measure progress, contained in ICCD/COP(4)/CST/5,

Taking note also of the concern expressed by representatives of the Committee on Science and Technology at its fourth session regarding the lack of information on scientific and technological information, particularly benchmarks and indicators, contained in the national reports submitted by Parties,

Recalling the previous work done by the Committee on Science and Technology on implementation and impact indicators, and in recognition of the importance of benchmarks and indicators as an essential tool to measure progress in the implementation of the Convention,

Recognizing the need for the coordination of various on-going initiatives, including thematic programmes and work undertaken by other conventions and institutions,

1. *Encourages* Parties to continue to collect, analyse and disseminate information as well as the results of initiatives undertaken at the national and subregional levels;

2. *Invites* Parties to develop a minimum set of impact indicators, with a view to selecting a common set of basic indicators at a later stage;

3. *Also invites* Parties to develop indicators to measure the participation of local communities and non-governmental organizations;

4. *Also invites* Parties and other countries in a position to provide assistance, as well as international organizations, to mobilize technical, scientific and financial support for the affected country Parties, and to initiate the testing of impact indicators, particularly at the national level;

5. *Encourages* Parties to include information in the national report on the scientific and technical activities to combat desertification undertaken at all levels, and to better integrate the activities of the scientific and technical community into the implementation of the Convention;

6. *Invites* Parties to include in their national reports the progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Science and Technology;

7. *Requests* the secretariat to revise, by the end of April 2001, the *Help Guide*, based on the issues expressed in paragraphs 5 and 6 above, with the aim of providing guidance to Parties to better reflect the activities of the scientific and technical communities and institutions in their national reports.

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22 December 2000

Decision 11/COP.4

Benchmarks and indicators

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling its decision 22/COP.1, by which it requested Governments to initiate testing of the implementation indicators identified in A/AC.241/INF.4 and revised in ICCD/COP(1)/CST/3/Add.1, and to report to the Conference of the Parties on the utility of such implementation indicators,

Recalling also its decisions 16/COP.2 and 11/COP.3,

Noting with appreciation the report on the synthesis of scientific and technical information, particularly with regard to the benchmarks and indicators used to measure progress, and an assessment thereof, contained in the reports received from country Parties for consideration by the Committee on Science and Technology, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/CST/5,

Taking note of the important progress achieved on benchmarks and indicators by the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Sahara and the Sahel Observatory (OSS) in Africa and by Parties in the Latin American and the Caribbean Group (GRULAC) and in other regions,

Taking note also of the proposal of the CILSS and the OSS on the development of benchmarks and indicators,

Noting the comments and recommendations of the Committee on Science and Technology during its fourth session,

1. *Encourages* the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, the Latin American and the Caribbean Group and the Sahara and the Sahel Observatory to continue their initiative on the development of benchmarks and indicators in collaboration with other partners, and in accordance with the annexed terms of reference;

2. *Requests* the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel and the Sahara and the Sahel Observatory to report on the progress of this initiative to the fifth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

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Annex

Terms of reference

1. CILSS, GRULAC, OSS, and other interested parties should advance their collaborative efforts:

(a) To exchange information on methods and results in the monitoring and evaluation of national, subregional, and regional action programmes;

(b) To analyse experiences in different regions at local, national, and regional levels in order to overcome technical constraints;

(c) To examine the relationships among indicators at different spatial and temporal scales;

(d) To identify selection criteria and a set of common impact and process indicators for better comparison across regions, for possible inclusion in national, subregional, and regional action programs;

2. The collaborating organizations should plan for future collaboration:

(a) To identify ways to enhance understanding of the benefits of monitoring and evaluation of national, subregional, and regional action programs and to promote political and social support for such efforts;

(b) To look for synergies among indicators developed by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

Decision 12/COP.4

Traditional knowledge

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling its decisions 14/COP.2 and 12/COP.3 on traditional knowledge,

Taking note of the report of the Ad Hoc Panel on Traditional Knowledge and the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on the subject,

Taking note also of the world network of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Reserves which can be an important site based tool to make inventories, validate and apply traditional knowledge,

Taking note also that the Italian authorities are in the process of establishing an international research centre on traditional knowledge at Matera, Italy,

1. *Invites* the Italian authorities to continue the work undertaken in collaboration with the other interested institutions and to present a proposal for the realization of a pilot project of a network of institutions, bodies and experts on traditional knowledge. The proposal should include scientific representatives of all interested Parties, a description of the role of interested members of the network, a detailed programme of work and the expected cost for its implementation;

2. *Requests* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, at its inter-sessional meeting to review the project, forward it to the regional groups and present it for consideration at the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties in order to share results and expand opportunities for partnerships.

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Decision 13/COP.4

Survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 25 of the Convention,

Recalling also its decisions 23/COP.1, 17/COP.2 and 13/COP.3,

Recognizing the efforts made by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and members of its consortium in this respect,

Having reviewed the written comments received by the secretariat from Parties, and the final report on phase one of the survey and evaluation submitted by UNEP on behalf of the consortium of agencies undertaking that phase,

Having reviewed also the relevant documents prepared for the Committee on Science and Technology at its fourth session, including the terms of reference for phase two of the survey and evaluation1/ to be carried out in the southern African subregion, and the proposal submitted by UNEP on behalf of its consortium members2/,

Taking note of the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on this subject3/,

Bearing in mind the usefulness of this survey and evaluation for the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Accepts* the proposal put forward by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on behalf of its consortium members, as contained in ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3/Add.1;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to enter into the necessary contractual arrangements with UNEP for the implementation of phase two of the survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies;

3. *Requests* UNEP on behalf of its consortium members to submit to the secretariat an interim progress report for presentation to the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session;

4. *Requests* Parties, signatories to the Convention and interested organizations including the Global Environment Facility to contribute to the Trust Fund established by resolution 47/188 of the General Assembly of the United Nations for the purpose of funding the work contemplated by this decision.

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1/ ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3.
2/ ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3/Add.1.
3/ ICCD/COP(4)/INF.7.

Decision 14/COP.4

Early warning systems

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 14/COP.3 to appoint an ad hoc panel on early warning systems,

Recalling also the follow-up to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

Taking note of the report of the ad hoc panel on Early Warning Systems1/, and the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on this subject2/,

Taking note also of the existence of networks of early warning systems and desertification monitoring and assessment at the national, subregional and regional levels,

1. *Re-appoints* an ad hoc panel on early warning systems to be composed of 10 experts in order to examine further the following:

(a) Critical analysis of the performance of early warning and monitoring and assessment systems, linking traditional knowledge and early warning systems, especially in the areas of the collection of data, dissemination of information and measuring for drought preparedness;

(b) Methods for and approaches to the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification, particularly the method of analysing vulnerability to drought and desertification, especially at the local, subnational and national levels, with special regard to new technological developments;

(c) Mechanisms to facilitate an exchange of information between scientific and technological institutions, in particular focusing on national and subregional networks on the prediction of drought and monitoring of desertification;

(d) More detailed measures for drought and desertification preparedness, in cooperation with the approaches, from hazard protection to risk management, adopted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements for the functioning of the ad hoc panel, including the provision of additional expertise, particularly in the area of participatory planning and legal advice.

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1/ ICCD/COP(4)/CST/4.
2/ ICCD/COP(4)/INF.7.

Decision 15/COP.4

Roster of independent experts

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 24, paragraph 2, of the Convention,

Having reviewed the revised roster of independent experts prepared by the secretariat in accordance with decision 15/COP.3, including the amended list of disciplines based on submissions from Parties through diplomatic channels,

Having reviewed also the report1/ prepared by the secretariat for the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Bearing in mind that little response was received by the secretariat from Parties on the use that has been made of the roster,

Noting the efforts made by the secretariat to ensure that the roster is available in electronic form as well as through the regular channels of the United Nations system,

Noting also the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on this subject,

1. *Invites* Parties to supplement their submissions to the secretariat for inclusion in the roster, with the aim in particular, of:

(a) Making the roster more balanced in terms of gender;

(b) Ensuring better representation of all relevant disciplines;

(c) Including expertise from grassroots organizations and non-governmental organizations;

2. *Invites* Parties that have not yet submitted nominations of experts for the roster, to do so, including full mailing and e-mail addresses, via regular diplomatic channels before 30 June 2001;

3. *Further invites* Parties to report to the secretariat before 30 June 2001 on the use that they have made of the roster;

4. *Requests* the secretariat to ensure that an updated roster is made available in electronic form, as appropriate;

5. *Also requests* the secretariat to distribute on an annual basis a hard copy of the roster to Parties.

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1/ ICCD/COP(4)/5/Add.1.

Decision 16/COP.4

Work programme of the Committee on Science and Technology

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 11/COP.1 on procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation, in particular paragraph 18 of the procedures annexed to that decision, which concerns the review process,

Recalling also decisions 12/COP.2 and 16/COP.3 on the programme of work of the Committee on Science and Technology,

1. *Decides* that at each session the Committee on Science and Technology will address in depth a priority issue relating to the implementation of the Convention and further decides that the fourth issue to be dealt with at the fifth session of the Committee on Science and Technology will be on strategies for the communication of information and its use to generate best practices for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, as described further in the annex;

2. *Invites* Parties and observers to contribute, in writing, case studies illustrating the communication of best practices related to the above theme which should not exceed 10 pages in length, and should be transmitted to the secretariat no later than 30 June 2001;

3. *Encourages* Parties and observers to include in such reports short accounts of traditional and scientific knowledge produced in various thematic fields relative to the issue of combating desertification, and strategies or mechanisms used for the communication and evaluation of the process, if available;

4. *Requests* the permanent secretariat to prepare a synthesis of such reports for consideration at the fifth session of the Committee on Science and Technology;

5. *Also decides* that the programme of work for the fifth session of the Committee shall include the other topics on the agenda for the fourth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

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Annex

Strategies for the communication of information and its use to generate best practices for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought

These strategies should include concepts of collection, analysis, synthesis and exchange of traditional and scientific knowledge, as given below:

1. The objective should be to establish specific effective communication procedures to combat desertification.

2. Communication procedures involve at least a two-way flow of information. Therefore information should not only be transferred from scientists to the grassroots level, but also from local communities to scientists, extension workers, policy makers and other users of information.

3. Use implies the acceptance, interpretation, adaptation and utilization of such knowledge for the specific local environment or situation.

4. Best practices refer to those procedures that are successful. The goal is to make use of those experiences as well as the information that flows from them, by sharing them with other similarly affected or interested parties. This refers to all best practices from a very specific situation, such as erosion control or catchment management, to wider issues such as land-use planning and policy formation.

5. It is recommended that case studies on best practices, taking into account both traditional and scientific knowledge, should be produced in various thematic fields relative to the issue of combating desertification.

Decision 17/COP.4

Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Committee on Science and Technology

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 24 of the Convention on the Committee on Science and Technology,

Recalling also decision 15/COP.1,

Taking note of the observations and recommendations of the Committee on Science and Technology during its fourth session,

1. *Encourages* the Parties to hold extensive consultations on ways of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Committee on Science and Technology, and to transmit their recommendations, which should not exceed five pages in length, to the secretariat by 1 May 2001;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare a synthesis of those recommendations and to facilitate intensive consultations among the regional groups, to consist of two representatives per region, not later than September 2001, and to report to the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session.

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Decision 18/COP.4

Dryland Degradation Assessment and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting with appreciation the initiatives on Dryland Degradation Assessment (LADA) and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment carried out by various international organizations and institutions, with the collaboration of the secretariat,

Taking note of the presentations made by representatives of LADA and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment;

Taking note also of the proposals on LADA and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment contained in ICCD/COP(4)/INF.6, and the involvement of the secretariat in the two initiatives,

1. *Requests* the secretariat to continue following closely the activities of the Dryland Degradation Assessment and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and to facilitate the involvement of the Parties, in order that the concerns of the Parties are taken into account in the assessments;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to report on the progress of these two initiatives at the fifth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

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Decision 19/COP.4

Consideration of rule 47 of the rules of procedure

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 21/COP.2 on consideration of rule 47 of the rules of procedure,

Taking note of the draft text of rule 47, as amended by decision 21/COP.2[1/],

Taking note also of the report from the secretariat contained in ICCD/COP(4)/7,

Having heard the report of the President of the Conference of the Parties at its third session on the result of his consultations on the outstanding issue related to rule 47 of the rules of procedure,

Requests the secretariat to include consideration of this outstanding rule of procedure on the agenda of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties.

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1/ ICCD/COP(3)/13, annex.

Decision 20/COP.4

Resolution of questions of implementation, arbitration and conciliation procedures

A. Resolution of questions of implementation

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 27 of the Convention, which states that the Conference of the Parties shall consider and adopt procedures and institutional mechanisms for the resolution of questions that may arise with regard to the implementation of the Convention,

Recalling also decision 20/COP.3,

1. *Decides*, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention, to reconvene during its fifth session an open-ended ad hoc group of experts to examine and make recommendations on procedures for the resolution of questions of implementation, in the light of the progress of the negotiations on the same matters in other relevant environmental conventions;

2. *Invites* Parties that wish to communicate their views to the secretariat on how to take the matter forward to do so, in writing, by 31 May 2001;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to incorporate such views into a revised version of ICCD/COP(4)/8, part I, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session;

4. *Further requests* the secretariat to update the information contained in the document referred to in paragraph 3, above, as necessary, to reflect the progress achieved in this area in other conventions, and to prepare revised documentation for consideration at its fifth session.

B. Arbitration and conciliation procedures

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 28, paragraph 2(a), of the Convention, which refers to arbitration procedures to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties in an annex to the Convention as soon as practicable,

Recalling further article 28, paragraph 6, of the Convention, which refers to conciliation procedures to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties in an annex to the Convention as soon as practicable,

Recalling also decision 20/COP.3,

1. *Decides*, in accordance with article 28 of the Convention, to reconvene during its fifth session the open-ended ad hoc group of experts to examine and make recommendations, in the light of the progress of the negotiations on the same matters in other relevant environmental conventions, on the following issues:

(a) annex on arbitration procedures;

(b) annex on conciliation procedures;

2. *Invites* Parties that wish to communicate their views on how to take this matter forward to do so, in writing, by 31 May 2001;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to incorporate such additional views into a revised version of ICCD/COP(4)/8, part II, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session;

4. *Further requests* the secretariat to update the information contained in the document referred to in paragraph 3, above, as necessary, to reflect the progress achieved in this area in other conventions, and to prepare revised documentation for consideration at its fifth session.

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Decision 21/COP.4

Report on the Third Round Table of Parliamentarians

The Conference of the Parties,

Having heard the presentation of the Declaration of Members of Parliament regarding the process of implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, made by Mr. Joachim Tappe reporting on the outcome of the Third Round Table of Parliamentarians, which took place at Bonn on 12 and 13 December 2000, and in which 34 parliamentarians from 20 countries participated,

1. *Takes note* with appreciation of the Declaration;

2. *Decides* to include the Declaration as an annex to the report of the Conference of the Parties on its fourth session.

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Annex

Declaration by Members of Parliament

Third Round Table of Members of Parliament
Bonn, from 12 to 13 December 2000 in parallel with the UNCCD-COP IV

The support of members of parliament for the strengthening of the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the identification of domestic revenue-neutral funding sources and the enhancement of technical and financial assistance to the countries most affected by desertification is expressed below.

I. We, the members of parliament meeting at Bonn, Germany, from 12 to 13 December 2000, for the third Round Table at the invitation of the Convention secretariat and the German Federal Bundestag, with the full support of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in the context of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,

reiterate the declaration we adopted at Dakar, Senegal, and at Recife, Brazil, on our role as members of parliaments in the implementation of the Convention, and being greatly concerned with the lack of progress in combating of desertification worldwide,

We declare that:

1. We are conscious that approximately 15 per cent of the world's population and 25 per cent of the total land area of the Earth are directly affected by land degradation and desertification processes. We share fully the founding premise of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, according to which sustainable development cannot be attained unless: (a) it is clearly oriented towards people, addresses the interests of affected populations and has as one of its main objectives the alleviation of poverty; (b) it fully involves affected populations and local communities in the decision-making process as well as in the implementation of measures to protect the environment, to improve the management of land and water resources and to overcome the main causes of land degradation and desertification;

2. We are greatly concerned that losses of productivity implied by desertification processes severely undermine sustainable economic growth, threaten food security and exacerbate susceptibility to famine, which are often accompanied by large-scale movements of displaced people. The failure of marginally productive land to cope with population pressures, together with increasingly variable climates, including recurrent drought, may already have displaced as many as 25 million people worldwide from their land and constituted a source of

inter-communal conflict in many parts of the world. Additionally, we are equally concerned that women and children, the socially and economically weak, tend to be hit hardest by the serious consequences of desertification;

3. We are deeply concerned with the gravity of the situation in different regions of the world, such as in Africa, a continent where deserts or arid zones constitute two thirds of the total land area and where 73 per cent of the arid land is already seriously or moderately degraded; in Asia where approximately 71 per cent of the Continent's arid lands are severely degraded; in Latin America and the Caribbean, where nearly three quarters of the arid land, representing almost one fourth of the region, is moderately or severely degraded; the Mediterranean, where almost two thirds of the arid land is severely degraded, and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where from 40 to 80 per cent of the arid land is severely degraded.

II. Conscious of the economic losses that result from decreasing the productive capacity of land resources and convinced that preventing further land degradation and desertification is more cost effective than remedying its environmental, social and economic consequences, we as members of parliament acknowledge that such consequences fall hardest on developing countries, that remediation programmes compete for scant financial resources and that, at the same time, these countries in fulfilling their international agreements have to divert considerable resources for debt repayment and servicing. We, therefore:

1. Urge the international community to seriously consider the ordeal and marginalization of heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) and urge it to implement appropriate relief measures, particularly in those countries seriously affected by drought and desertification;

2. Reaffirm the importance of ensuring access to appropriate financial resources, including new and additional ones, for affected developing countries in order to allow them to fully deliver the obligation contracted under the UNCCD;

3. Welcome in this regard the decision taken by the Council of the Global Environmental facility (GEF) during its meeting held in Washington D.C. from 1 to 3 November 2000, by which it requested the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the GEF to explore the best options to strengthen the support of the GEF to affected developing countries, particularly in Africa, in their process of implementation of UNCCD;

4. Urge the international community, and particularly the executive branches of Parties to take all necessary measures for the establishment of a new window within the GEF for the specific purpose of financing the incremental costs of the UNCCD implementation;

5. Call for a concerted effort by bodies of the UN System, regional development banks, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to enhance desertification monitoring systems as a support for sustainable agricultural policies, better water resource and forest management, land use planning, as well as urban planning;

6. Invite executive branches of government in developing countries to consider the formulation of revenue-neutral national policies to counter further land degradation and desertification. These policies should be justified on the basis of avoidance of future costs resulting from biodiversity loss, adverse effects of climate change, further encroachment of deserts into arable land areas, increased displacement of people and refugee flows, and amplified potential for conflicts within poor countries and between neighbouring countries;

7. Urge international organizations and developed countries to increase assistance to developing countries in the implementation of their own domestic policies in combating desertification. These policies should fully integrate the adverse consequences of land degradation and desertification into economic, social, agricultural and land planning; and

8. Fully support all initiatives of agencies, donor countries and civil society to mobilise new and additional financial resources to implement the Convention to Combat Desertification as a concrete tool for ensuring the promotion of sustainable development in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid ecosystems.

III. In affirming our commitment, as members of parliaments, to contribute fully to the implementation of the Convention, we agree to initiate or continue serious efforts in the national parliaments of developed countries to strengthen technical and financial assistance to combat desertification in the most affected and poorest countries, attaching central importance to support for their own self-help efforts. We also commit ourselves:

1. To convene an annual special event, the "International Day to Combat Desertification", in our parliaments on 17 June to raise awareness on the implementation of the Convention and to support such initiatives a commemorative postal stamps, among others;

2. To strengthen national initiatives to enhance the fight against desertification;

3. To advocate increased financial and technical support from national budgets to combat desertification and land degradation;

4. To submit, where necessary, to the executive branches of governments a proposal for the inclusion in school curricula of disciplines focusing on the protection of the environment and of natural resources, particularly land and water resources, so as to make combating erosion and desertification a priority for our countries, as well as for our regional and subregional organizations;

IV. We note those countries that have ratified the Convention and urge those that have not yet ratified it to do so as soon as possible as a concrete step towards a concerted effort to combat desertification.

1. Moreover, we support the active participation of all parliaments in the implementation of the Convention including, where necessary, the introduction, strengthening and implementation of legislation relating

to the fight against desertification and the protection and preservation of ecosystems in countries affected;

2. In doing so, we urge Parliaments and the international community to address desertification not only as a serious environmental and/or ecological problem, but also as a serious hindrance to development with severe long-term global economic, social and political consequences.

V. In highlighting the fundamental role that technical assistance, enhanced environmental monitoring and capacity building play in the challenge to achieve sustainable development, we members of parliament, urge donor agencies and countries to consider strengthening their support for the following measures, building upon self-help efforts to be made by developing countries:

1. Awareness raising on production and consumption patterns and their impact on the land;

2. Water and river basin management;

3. Improvement of technical land and water management skills;

4. Sustainable use of scarce natural resources including renewable sources of energy;

5. Promotion of specific research on the causes and negative effects of desertification;

6. Transfer and adaptation of environmentally sound technologies for better land and natural resource management, and the effective use of modern and safe bio-technologies to disseminate drought-resistant species;

7. Use of state-of-the-art information technologies such as geographic information systems, the rational and integrated management of river basins, and the protection, promotion and utilization of traditional and site-specific technological knowledge and practices;

8. Reforestation and forest conservation to combat desertification caused by drought as well as by deforestation due to population increase, overgrazing, illegal and excessive logging, bush and forest fires, etc;

9. Agricultural development, for example, by establishing sustainable irrigation facilities to secure stable water supplies;

10. Capacity building such as training sessions and despatch of experts to enhance the scientific and technical capacity, taking into consideration the special role of women, for combating desertification;

11. Promotion of deeper dialogue with and the active participation of the local community so that aid programmes can be tailored to local conditions;

12. Closer collaboration with non-governmental and community-based organizations and the civil society, which carry out grassroots aid activities and play an important role in combating desertification.

VI. We commit to establish an effective follow-up mechanism for the purpose of overseeing and ensuring the systematic monitoring of the implementation of the decisions we have taken and decide:

1. To underline the importance of operationalizing a viable inter-sessional mechanism through an open-ended high-level forum of members of parliaments composed of a chairperson, a rapporteur and five vice-chairpersons, with at least one coming from each of the following regional groups: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Eastern Europe and North America.

2. To request, in this regard, the Convention secretariat, in consultation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union to prepare a concrete proposal for the functioning of the high-level forum and to circulate it among members of parliament involved in previous round tables, for response not later than 31 May 2001, with a view of approving it before the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

3. To solicit the Convention secretariat to post and update information on round table discussions on the UNCCD Web site;

4. To request all presiding officers to take steps to publicise the present declaration by placing it on the agenda of their national parliaments or by bringing it to the attention of all members of their parliament in some other appropriate way.

VII. We, members of parliament, reiterate our urgent appeal:

1. To all participants in civil society, such as financial institutions, experts in the fields of finance, industry, commerce, sports, the media and the arts, to support the mobilisation of financial resources for the fight against desertification, in particular in those developing countries most seriously affected by desertification, erosion and drought;

2. To academic institutions, the scientific community and research centres for their support in the various tasks of implementing the Convention in the affected countries with particular regard to the needs of developing countries;

3. To the Inter-Parliamentary Union to give the widest possible publicity to this Declaration and, particularly, to ensure that it be transmitted to all national parliaments for their attention and implementation.

VIII. Finally, we request the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, with the assistance of the Inter-Parliamentary Union:

1. To provide technical support to the high-level forum of members of parliament in its role of monitoring action carried out by governments, and to mobilise additional resources for the servicing of the high-level forum;

2. To organize the next round table of members of parliaments in conjunction with the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;

3. To take follow-up action on the decisions of the present round table and to develop strategies in order to achieve universal awareness of the declarations and progress reports of the high-level forum of members of parliament.

Decision 22/COP.4

Date and venue of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 22, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985,

1. *Expresses* its sincere appreciation to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany as well as the government of North-Rhine/Westphalia and the City of Bonn for the warm welcome and the substantial support provided to facilitate the holding of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties;

2. *Decides* that the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties shall be held at Bonn, Germany, the site of the Convention secretariat, from 17 to 28 September 2001, in the event that no Party makes an offer to host that session and to meet the additional financial cost;

3. *Invites* the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Bureau to accommodate, by 31 March 2001, any offer from a Party to host the fifth session;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to take the necessary measures to prepare for the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties.

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22 December 2000

Decision 23/COP.4

Credentials of representatives of Parties to the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The Conference of the Parties,

Having considered the report on credentials of the Bureau of the fourth session1/ of the Conference of the Parties and the recommendation contained therein,

Approves the report on credentials submitted by the Bureau of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties.

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22 December 2000

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1/ See also ICCD/COP(4)/10.